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SOFTWARE ANTI-PIRACY LICENSING

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

5 A method for electronic enforcement of licenses for software services installed
on computers connected through a communications network employs a non-renewable
electronic license that is uniquely identified with a specific computer, is of limited
duration, and is digitally signed to detect tampering. The licenses are maintained on
the computer that operates the licensed software service, referred to as the point-of-
10 service computer. The method employs intelligent license servicing agents to
periodically refresh the limited duration licenses on the point-of-service computer with
new purchased limited duration licenses from a license server. The license servicing
agent pushes the licenses to or back from the license server. If necessary, the license
servicing agent can operate on one or more console computers that act as proxy license
15 servers by keeping a copy of the point-of-service licenses and refreshing them
automatically when the license servicing agent initiates a connection to the point-of-
service computer for maintenance. The licensing service agents can operate on any
number of console computers or on the license server itself, and can operate to refresh
licenses for any number of point-of-service computers. The point-of-service
20 computers can operate independently of and without connection to the console
computers or license server computers, and are automatically refreshed with new
licenses without requiring end user intervention.